

THE  
**SATURDAY MAGAZINE.**

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VOL. II.—NO. 26.

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**Philadelphia, June 29, 1822.**

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**Miscellany.**

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FROM BLACKWOOD'S EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

**THE PARISIAN MIRROR; OR, LETTERS FROM PARIS.**

*February 15, 1822.*

Dear Sir—As the literature of country is marked with its peculiar characteristics, so the theatrical art must necessarily adopt those shades of character which distinguish the spirit of one nation from that of another. The climate, the manners and particular habits of a people, have necessitated laws founded on their welfare; and, in like manner, dramatic literature, which has unquestionably a great influence on the humour and conduct of the multitude, must have formed its laws on the same principle. The English and the Germans seem to require stronger sensations than the French, on account of the greater degree of apathy in their national character; while the Italian theatre appears to sympathize better with that of the French, from the warmth of imagination in the inhabitants of the south, which differs but little from that of a temperate climate.

During the last thirty years, the wants and manners of the  
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French have changed, and their theatrical system has deeply felt the consequences of this vicissitude; that is to say, that, without violating the fundamental rules of the dramatic art, the revolution of ideas has naturally forced authors to overthrow the barrier which fettered the march of genius, and to trace a new path, in which they have been more or less successful. Historical comedy, unknown a century ago, has arisen on the scene which seemed to hold out the *Misanthrope* and *Tartuffe* as the only models for comic genius. Tragi-comedy opened a new career for dramatic authors; most of them have greatly abused it; and, as imitation is the ordinary resource of mediocrity, they have endeavoured to prove that it is not sufficient to move the feelings of the spectator, but that it is necessary also to satisfy his eyes and his ears; hence sprung the melo-drama, which owes its chief success to decoration, dancing, and music, while talent and interest are only accessories.

But the *melo-drama* itself, now so popular in Paris, has two powerful rivals, the *Vaudeville* and the pantomime. *Le Français né malin créa la Vaudeville*, says Boileau; and, according to this remark, wit and pleasantry, combined with *bon ton*, should form the soul of this species of drama; but these vital ingredients have not of late made their appearance very frequently.

The pantomime, that dear delight of the conquerors of the world, is new in France; for it has only really existed in Paris within these fifteen or twenty years; but some admirable performers, and in particular actresses, have shown that genius and sensibility are capable of exciting the deepest emotions without any aid from speech.

If the great theatres in Paris often make the enlightened critic regret preceding times, the secondary ones appear anxious to make up for this striking deficiency. Some pretended philosophers have maintained that these *petits spectacles* are prejudicial to the manners and morals of the people; but can there be any harm in laughing at a good joke, or in weeping over an instance of heroic devotion? Is it not a hundred times better to listen to sentiments of virtue and morality in a play, however stupid or silly the piece may be, than to spend the gains of industry and labour in gross debauchery? There is a censorship on the stage which no doubt will prevent the introduction of any immoral or dangerous maxims into the productions of the theatre.

The English and German theatres have contributed not a little of late years to the success of this dramatic revolution in Paris; but as exchanges between nations are the soul of commerce, so these literary contributions probably have a beneficial effect on dramatic literature in general.



You know very well what those dark and narrow boxes are all round a French theatre, which are called *baignaires*, bathing tubs. Some pretend that this name was given them because one might suppose that a pretty woman with naked shoulders, and nothing but her hair, was really taking a bath there; while others, looking after figures of rhetoric, see in this denomination nothing but a *metonymy* or a *synecdoche*, and maintain that a *baignoire* is synonymous with *étuves*, a stew, because, say they, all the time you are in these boxes, you are really in a vapour bath. Whatever may have been the original idea of the inventors of this appellation for those boxes, or rather cages, in which six individuals come to be shut up every evening, it must be allowed that the peaceable inhabitants of the pit never had a more terrible neighbourhood. A friend of mine, who seldom goes to the theatre, hearing that I was going to the *Vau-deville*, where I have not been for a long time, said to me, "If you go, take care not to be in the centre of the pit; you will get into the midst of a filthy set, without hats, without shirts, covered with grease and dirt—in short, they call them *les claqueurs*; beware of them." I went and installed myself at the extremity of the pit, near the *baignaires*. Good heavens! what a noise! what a chattering! two scenes were already acted, and I had positively heard nothing but the noise of locks opening and shutting, the going and coming of the *ouvreuses*, the cracking of chairs, and the rustling of silks. "Are you well there?—you had better come here:—you will see much better—do you know what the play is?—is not my hat in your way? No, *belle dame*, not in the least.—I'm sure it is—stop, I'll take it off—I can assure you I see perfectly well.—It does not signify—see if you can hang it upon that nail." At this moment every head in the pit turned round, and a lengthened *sht* came from every mouth, but the conversation went on all the same. "Ah! *mon dieu*, I have forgot my *lorgnette*—Will you take mine?—I wish you would get me a *tabouret*."—The pit turns round again, *sht, sht*. But the prattle goes on.—"We did not see you yesterday, M. Le Comte.—That's true, an indispensable affair.—(*Chut! donc*)—Oh! what a beautiful seal you have got there!—(*chut! donc*)—Where did you buy it?—(*chut! à la porte*, turn them out.)—I'll get one like it—(*Silence, donc Mesdames!*) for my husband (*à la porte l'insolente!*)"—and the curtain dropped.

After all, I had the patience to remain where I was, hoping that a good half hour between the acts would give the ladies time to exhaust their conversation. Vain hope! a terrible whispering went on during the whole of the entertainment. The only words I could hear were *gloire* and *victoire*, *laurier*

and *guerrier*, which the actors are in the habit of pronouncing as loud as they can.

Any other man perhaps would have turned round and given a pretty smart rebuke to these indiscreet *baigneuses*; and I should have done it myself, I believe, only a philosophical idea came into my head, that perhaps the most interesting part of the play for me, after all, would be that which was going on behind my back. I listened, therefore, attentively, and before the play was over, I had got a deal of the history of more than twenty ladies who were figuring away in the first rows. I put down their names in my *album*, with the little scandalous chronicle opposite, determined to make a delightful use of the precious information I had thus got for nothing.

At every step almost one takes in Paris one meets with one of those *merveilleux*, whose only talent consists in showing himself off in a thousand different forms. His memory always enriched with the song of the day, and with some adventure of yesterday evening, the cameleon of the *boudoir*, and eagerly looked for in all the *salons à la mode*; he might almost pass, in some peoples' eyes, for a really clever fellow. But an observer, accustomed to "shoot folly as it flies," does not let himself be dazzled by the brilliant jargon of these well taught parrots; and notwithstanding the high eulogiums which he hears thrown out on all sides, on this borrowed fluency, he knows how to catch and unmask these contraband troubadours.

The young and dashing S\*\*\*\* C\*\*\*\*, for example, whom I met the other day, and who is merely a clerk in a great office, enjoys among the *beau monde* quite a colossal reputation. *Qu'il est aimable!* exclaim the *petites-maitresses* of the *Chaussée d'Antin*. *Qu'il est gai!* cries out the wife of a *negociant* of the *Rue Saint-Denis*. *Qu'il est spirituel!* says the *chaste moitié* of a notary in the *Isle Saint-Louis*. *Comme il pense bien!* repeats an old *marquise* of the *Faubourg Saint-Germain*. My dear ladies, you are all sadly mistaken: S\*\*\*\* C\*\*\*\* is neither *aimable*, nor *gai*, nor *spirituel*, nor *bien pensant*; *c'est un sot*, but—he is *complaisant*. In fact, watch him at a *bal* in the *Chaussée d'Antin*, you will see him fluttering round the body of the house, and dividing his time between the bets of a *table d'ecarte* the ironical insipidities of a cavalier gallantry, and the stormy discussion of a *projet de loi*.

Do you meet him at the *réunion* of a *riche marchand*? oh! here's quite another man. He charms the lively *bourgeoises* with comical recitals of intrigues among the ministers and their ladies; he parodies the speeches of the principal speakers in the Chamber of Deputies, or taking up a flute or flageolet that is lying about, he gives them a favourite overture of Rossini, or the eternal duet of *Lucile*.



With the notary of the *Isle Saint-Louis*, seated between an *avoué de première instance* and a *receveur de rentes*, he decides with a doctoral tone on the literary merit of the *Lampe merveilleuse*, and of the *Chien de Montargis*. At the earnest request of the *maitresse du logis*, he will perhaps condescend to inscribe one of his brightest thoughts on the *album* of her eldest daughter, and finishes the *soirée* by murdering on a guitar some well-known tune accompanied with a Spanish song.

But his triumph is in the *Faubourg Saint-Germain*. The old Marquise de \*\*\*\* loves *le twist*, *Pyrame*, and *la Quotidienne*. Here S\*\*\*\* C\*\*\*\* is admirable; he becomes the *partenaire* of the *Marquise* at a rubber,—extols *Pyrame* to the skies,—reads two whole columns aloud of the blessed *Quotidienne*—what heroism!—what devotion!

Go on happy S\*\*\*\* C\*\*\*\*, with such an agreeable, such a dissipated career. *La complaisance* leads the way to every thing; add only to this virtue, which you possess in such a high degree, a few grains of flattery, and your fortune is made for ever.

All nations like to have a good opinion of themselves, and as one does not even like to be woke out of a pleasant dream, so the illusions of national superiority are often indulged without any real foundation in truth. Thus, the French, for a long time past, have been firmly convinced that their opera is *le premier l'Europe*, though their own senses, their judgment, and the declarations of some not over-flattering strangers, have repeatedly told them the contrary. Far from me the idea of throwing any ridicule on an establishment so grand and beautiful; and, in a capital like this, so necessary as the opera. There is, indeed, every reason to think that no other opera in Europe surpasses, or even equals, that of Paris, in the beauty of the scenery, the regularity of the drama, the precision of all the manœuvres, the richness; and even the exactness of the decorations and costumes, notwithstanding some slight anachronisms and local faults that are occasionally committed. No where is there so numerous an assemblage of dancers of the first order, or *corps de ballet* so complete and so well disciplined: nothing is really defective in the French opera, nothing but one single important part: the SINGING.

I am not one of those who think that it is absolutely impossible to have good singing in France, and with French words: the example of some performers at the Faydeau, and even at the great opera, might prove the contrary. At the same time, it must be universally allowed, that the French language, not being so melodious nor so sonorous as the Italian, can never hope to rival it in musical effect; but still one would think that the distance is sufficiently great between the softly-sweet warblings of the Italian *bravura*, and the deafening screams

of an ordinary French singer, for the establishment of some reasonable medium.

Though the greater number of the singers at the opera in Paris, agree in singing in general like the joyous roarers of a *cabaret*, the result of which is a fatiguing uniformity, still they are far from having a unity of method, which they only know by name. Their only object is, by violent commotions, to bring forth the applauses of the pit, seven-eighths of which know nothing of music, but, however, are very sure to exclaim after each such exertion of the throat—*quelle voix!* This is the aureola of glory to which the Parisian singer aspires: but it is, at the same time, this very thing which disgusts strangers, and keeps away from the opera all men of taste, who like to hear pure, rational singing, without all this violent agitation of the lungs and throat. How can one distinguish the melody of a composition, or enjoy its beauties, when the street-cries are substituted in place of the work of the composer?

This rage for screaming, in order to make a parade of an extraordinary power of voice, not only deprives the hearers of the charms of music, but, moreover, ruins all the young *débutans*, who have not courage or experience enough to resist the fatal ascendancy of their companions; and in fact every new singer who comes to the opera with a fine voice and a good method, is sure to lose them. On this account the government is at a very useless expense of enormous sums in getting up the masterpieces of the French opera. Incredible pains are taken to procure fine singers, who become more scarce every day, because the moment they appear at the opera their talent is ruined; so that both government and the musical art lose all the fruit that might be reasonably expected from such exertions and such sacrifices, merely because some silly singers get a posse of barbarians and simpletons to exclaim every moment,—*quelle voix! quelle voix!*

I dined yesterday in a house in the *Chaussée d'Antin*, from which opulence does not exclude gaiety. A young poet had just sung a new song on the *vieille gloire des braves*; the men were groping round a *député* who had just come from the Chamber, while at the other extremity of the *salon*, two young ladies were preparing to execute a duet of the brilliant Rossini. All of a sudden I recollected that I had a *rendezvous* on particular business at ten o'clock, with a *cidevant jolie femme* of the Faubourg Saint Germain, who has made herself a *romantique*, in order that she may still be something.

I stole away with regret, flew and arrived. A *femme-de-chambre*, who informed me that *Madame* was not yet come back from a meeting of the *Société des Bonnes Lettres*, introduced me into her study, shut the door and left me alone. A lamp with a transparency shed an uncertain and reddish glimmer on



the violet draperies of the window. A guitar, flowers, and papers in disorder, covered the table and writing-desk. A *corps de bibliotheque*, terminated with a pointed arch, presented a suite of elegant volumes, embellished outside by the tasteful art of the celebrated *Thouverin*. I went near to read the titles, and I perceived in golden letters on a binding of black morocco—*Jean Sbogar!* Intimidated, I cast my eyes lower down; they fell on the *Corsaire de Byron*; higher up was the *Solitaire*, and in an empty place which I remarked near it, is no doubt destined for the *Renégat*. A romance was on the piano, it was the *Brigands de Schiller*.

I confess it, melancholy is not my element. I took a turn or two in the room, a good deal out of humour; I felt myself *de-placé*—for to my shame I must declare it—in this fanciful asylum of the *superstitions du cœur et du vague indéfini de l'existence*. However, I must wait, so I sat down: before me, on a rich reading-desk, was a book not yet cut; I opened it, it was *Vertu et Scélératesse*, or *La Fatalité*. I ran rapidly over the pages, and in a very short time made acquaintance with Don Ramire, chivalric, loyal and faithful; Zoraime, a haughty and passionate woman; Muley, a feeble and suspicious prince; Barbarossa, a pirate and conqueror; and Donna Isabella, a tender and constant mistress, who nevertheless espouses, not her lover, but another man, because he was too late by an hour to the term of two years and three days, which had been fixed by an inexorable father. With a view to the general interests of society, I could not help applauding this salutary example, which will undoubtedly have the effect of making young men more exact at *rendezvous* in future. But at length came the *véritable heros*: a man stained with crimes, harrowed with remorse, a horrible, execrable monster—in short a renegado! Absorbed in this character, I was following with horror the projects and adventures of this *être inconcevable*, when I felt a hand pressing on my shoulder. I screamed out and turned round—it was the mistress of the house laughing at my fright. “By heavens, *Madame*,” said I, “the *brigandage* which reigns in French literature at this moment really alarmed me. You, who know so well that the terrible *Jean Sbogar* had a *petite main blanche*, cannot be surprised that you frightened me.”

We sat down and proceeded to the business for which I had come. I thought I perceived in the course of the conversation that the worship of the *romantic* muses does not entirely exclude a taste for the realities of life; and that when you talk to a *romantique* of the main chance, she does not look altogether like a being of another world.

## WHO WOULD BE AN OLD BACHELOR?

Tom Tardy began life with a good person, a tolerable property, and a large share of self-conceit. He had so high an opinion of his own deserts, that he fancied any woman on whom he bestowed his hand ought to think herself the most fortunate of beings; and he determined not to be in a hurry to marry, but to wait till he found a woman perfectly beautiful and accomplished, and with a fortune equal at least if not superior to his own.

In vain did his mother, a worthy and sensible matron, laugh at the picture he frequently drew of his future *sposa*, and tell him, that if he did not abate something of his pretensions, the chances were a hundred to one, that he would die an old bachelor. Tardy generally listened to the good lady's harangues with a smile of mingled incredulity and contempt, and usually replied, by begging that she would not make herself uneasy on his account, as he had no doubt of finding a wife whenever he chose to submit to the matrimonial yoke.

A neighbour of Tardy's had a daughter, a lively and good-natured girl, some years younger than Tom. They had lived together from her childhood in the closest intimacy, and she had become imperceptibly attached to him. The attachment was, however, a secret to herself, till a proposal of marriage, which her father was very pressing with her to accept, opened her eyes to the state of her heart; the vehemence with which she persisted in refusing this offer, and her tears and blushes when interrogated as to her reasons, gave her father suspicion of the cause. He watched her behaviour when she was in Tardy's company, and he soon became convinced that his suspicions were just. The discovery did not displease him; Tardy's fortune was indeed inferior to his own, but in other respects it would be a suitable match, and he frankly offered Tom the young lady's hand.

This proposal threw our hero into wonderful perplexity: the girl was pretty, amiable, and sensible; he had also that kind of attachment to her which old-fashioned people would pronounce likely to render the married state happier than a violent passion, but still she was not that all-perfect being which he had determined the future Mrs. Tardy should be: so after a struggle between natural feelings and absurd pride, he declined the proposal.

This circumstance considerably increased Tardy's importance in his own opinion; he now began to fancy himself a complete Adonis, and to look with an eye of compassion on those unfortunate fair-ones whom chance exposed to the fire of his eyes. He descanted upon beauty with the air of a connoisseur,



regarded young ladies with a smile of protection, and where he was forced to pay attention, did it with the air of a man whose notice gives consequence. He made it a boast that no charms could blind his judgment; and whenever he heard a lady's face or figure extolled, he was always the first to discover what she wanted to make her perfectly beautiful.

In this manner, year after year rolled away, and still Tardy did not find the peerless she, who was to transform him into a Benedict. In the mean time, he began to meet with mortifications; girls whom he had known in frocks grew up into women, and so far from treating him with all that deference which he deserved, they had the impertinence to turn him into ridicule. The *belles* of his earlier days, who knew how to set a proper value upon his civilities, were either married or had become old maids. The male friends with whom he used to lounge away his mornings were settled into sober family men, who sometimes hinted to Tardy, that they thought he was in danger of becoming an old bachelor; a hint which he always answered by declaring, that at thirty-nine a man has still plenty of time to choose a wife, and for his part he was determined not to hurry himself.

Just before he attained his fortieth year, he was attacked with a nervous fever, and as he had lost his mother some years before, he felt the want of female care and tenderness during the long confinement which his illness occasioned, so forcibly, that when he recovered he resumed his pursuit with more earnestness than he ever felt before; and he soon determined upon addressing the young and beautiful Celia, in whom he thought he had at last found the *rara avis* he had been so long in search of. But as he was now known to be a noted dangler, the fair Celia made use of him without scruple to cover an amour which she was secretly carrying on with a handsome young officer, with whom she eloped at the very moment that Tardy thought himself sure of her.

This disappointment was gall and wormwood to the pride of poor Tardy; his acquaintance ridiculed him unmercifully, and he determined to be revenged, by showing them how easily he could get a handsome wife when he chose to set in earnest about it: but somehow he did not find it such an easy matter; he was not dashing enough for the fashionable Miss Flutter, nor sufficiently clever for the young widow Bon-mot, and his fortune was too small for the prudent Miss Matchwell. In short, to his astonishment and chagrin, he found, that although he lowered his pretensions, there still seemed very little chance of his getting a wife.

Tardy at last prudently determined to be satisfied with a sensible and amiable woman, even though she was neither rich nor

handsome; but he was now turned of forty-five, he looked older, and he had acquired besides certain habits rather inimical to domestic comfort, and which are usually considered as the decided characteristics of an old bachelor. These peculiarities made him laughed at by young ladies, who regarded him as an old quiz, and dreaded by staid middle aged ones, who feared that he would turn out a tyrant. Enraged at his various disappointments, he has now, at fifty-five, forsworn matrimony, and boasts of the perfect freedom he enjoys, while in reality he is a slave to his housekeeper, and of his happy exemption from domestic cares, though he is incessantly squabbling with his servants for cheating him. In short, his abuse of the holy state puts one in mind of the fable of the fox and the grapes; for whenever you see him in company with a happy couple, his countenance says plainly enough, "Oh who would be an old bachelor?"

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#### KNITTING AND WEAVING OF STOCKINGS.

The art of knitting stockings was first discovered in the sixteenth century; but the time of its first invention is rather doubtful, as it is also uncertain who was the real inventor. We are told, that when the French stocking knitters became so numerous as to form a guild, they made choice of *St. Fiacre*, a native of Scotland, to be their patron; and there is a tradition, that the first silk stockings were brought to France from Scotland.

Henry VIII. who reigned from 1509 to 1547, and who was always fond of show and magnificence, used to wear woollen stockings, till, by a singular occurrence, he received a pair of knit silk stockings from Spain. His son, Edward VI. who succeeded him on the throne, obtained, by means of Sir Thomas Gresham, a pair of long Spanish knit silk stockings. Queen Elizabeth, in the third year of her reign, in the year 1561, received, by her silk-woman, a pair of knit silk stockings, and afterwards would wear none other kind.

In the year 1564, one William Rider, apprentice to Mr. Thomas Burdet, having seen a pair of knit worsted stockings in the shop of an Italian merchant, borrowed them and made a pair exactly like them.

In the year 1510, Henry VIII. appeared, on a public occasion, with his attendants, dressed in the following manner: the king, and some of the gentlemen, had the upper part of their hose, which were of blue and crimson, powdered with castels and sheaves of arrows of fine ducat gold, and the lower parts, which were scarlet, powdered with timbrels. In the year 1530, the word *knit* seems to have been common in England; yet in the reign of Mary, 1558, many wore cloth hose; for Doctor Sands,



afterwards Archbishop of York, being in the Tower, had permission for a tailor to come and take an order for a pair of hose.

About 1577 knitting began to be common, and when Queen Elizabeth was at Norwich, in 1579, upon the stage there stood, at one end, eight little girls spinning worsted yarn, and at the other end, as many knitting it into hose.

Silk stockings, in consequence of their very high price, for a long time were only worn on very grand occasions. Henry II. of France wore them, for the first time, on the marriage of his sister with the Duke of Savoy, in 1559.

The invention of the stocking loom is worthy of attention, because it is alleged to have been the production of a single person, and perfected at one trial; his name, and the exact period is ascertained. It is founded on a similar incident to that of the beautiful Corinthian maid, who invented the art of painting. We bestow a particular attention to the incident that produced the stocking loom, trusting it will interest our fair readers, when they shall find it is ascribed to almighty LOVE.

Under Cromwell's usurpation, the stocking-knitters of London presented a petition, asking permission to establish a guild. In this petition was rendered the best and truest account of the origin and progress of *their* trade; that of stocking-weaving, being then scarcely fifty years old. In *Deering's Account of Nottingham* may be found this petition. In that town the loom was first employed, which has given wealth to so many.

The inventor's name was William Lee, a native of Woodborough, in Nottinghamshire, a village, seven miles distant from Nottingham. He was heir to a considerable freehold estate, and a graduate of St. John's college, Cambridge. Being enamoured of a young country girl, who, during his visits, paid more attention to her work, which was knitting, than to her lover or his proposals, it seems to have occurred to him, that by the assistance of simple machinery, the work might be facilitated and the operation of knitting much simplified, and more leisure afforded to the object of his affections to converse with him. Love is, indeed, said to be fertile in inventions, but a machine so complex, so wonderful in its effects, would seem to require a longer time than was probably allowed by these circumstances.

That Lee made the first stocking-loom, in 1589, there is no doubt; and in the stocking weaver's hall in London, is an old painting of him, pointing out his loom to a female knitter, who stands near him: below is an inscription, with the date 1589, as follows:—"The ingenious William Lee, Master of Arts of St. John's College, Cambridge, devised this profitable art for stockings, (but being despised, went to France,) yet of iron to

himself, but to us and others of gold ; in memory of whom this is here painted."

Havell, in his history, says, that the loom was invented by Lee, thirty-nine years after Elizabeth had worn silk stockings. The petition from the stocking-knitters stated that the loom had been invented fifty years. Cromwell's usurpation bears date 1658.

Lee showed his work to Queen Elizabeth, and craved some assistance from that princess, but she refused it her support; and he accepted an invitation from Henry IV. of France, who had heard of his invention, and promised to reward him. He took nine journeymen and several looms, to Rouen in Normandy, where he worked with much approbation and success; but the king being shortly after assassinated, and internal troubles taking place in the kingdom, Lee fell into great distress, and died soon after in Paris.

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#### THE INDIAN LOTOS, OR LILY OF THE EAST.

From Sir R. Porter's Travels in Georgia, &c.

This flower was full of meaning to the ancients, and occurs all over the east. Egypt, Palestine, Persia, and India, present it every where in the decorations of their architecture, in the hands, and on the heads of their sculptured figures, whether in statue or in bas relief. We also find it in the sacred vestments and architecture of the tabernacle, and temple of the Israelites; and see it mentioned by our Saviour, as an image of peculiar beauty and glory, when comparing the works of nature with the decorations of art. It is also represented in all pictures of the Salutation of Gabriel to the Virgin Mary; and, in fact, has been held in mysterious veneration by people of all nations and times. The old heraldic work of "The Theatre of Honour," published in France, about two hundred years ago, gives this curious account of the Lotos, or Lily:—"It is the symbol of divinity, of purity, and abundance, and of a love most complete in perfection, charity, and benediction; as in the Holy Scripture, that mirror of chastity, Susanna, is defined Susa, which signifieth the lily flower; the chief city of the Persians bearing that name for its excellency. Hence the lily's three leaves in the arms of France mean Piety, Justice, and Charity." So far the general impression of a peculiar regard to this beautiful and fragrant flower; but the early Persians attached a particular sanctity to it.

Water, according to their belief, was held in the next degree of reverence to fire; and the white flower, which sprung from the bosom of the colder element, was considered an emblem of its purity, submissiveness, and, above all, of its fecundity, when



meeting the rays of the great solar flame. These symbols, united in the lily their joint properties had produced, represented to the poetical conceptions of the east, first, the creative and regenerating attributes of the Supreme Being himself; and secondly, the imparted powers of the great elements of earth, air, water, and fire, to act mutually on each other, so that, at the return of certain seasons, moisture should spread over the land, from the clouds or the rivers, the air should dry the ground, the sun's beams fructify it, and the grateful earth, at the call of all united in the genial breath of Spring, pour forth her increase. Hence, as the Sovereigns of the East have always been revered, according to a tradition of their being the express vicegerents of the Deity, it is not surprising to see the same emblematic flower carried in a procession to their honours, which would be found "breathing sweet incense" amongst the symbols of an entirely religious festival.

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### Variety.

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#### POPULAR SUPERSTITION OF THE DEATH-BELL.

By the dead-bell is meant a tingling in the ears, which the Scotch peasantry, and also many in the north of England, regard as a secret intelligence of some friend's decease. Two servant girls, lately, who lived at a farm-house in Scotland, agreed to go on an errand of their own, one night after supper, to a considerable distance, from which a young man tried to persuade them, but to no purpose. After going to the apartment where he slept, he took a drinking glass, and going close to the back of the door, made two or three sweeps round the edge of the glass with his finger, which caused a loud shrill sound, and produced the following dialogue. B. "Ah! mercy! the dead-bell went through my head just now with such a knell as I never heard." I. "I heard it too." B. "Did you, indeed? That is remarkable. I never knew of two hearing it at the same time before." I. "We will not go to Midgethorpe, to-night." B. "I would not go for all the world. I shall warrant it is my poor brother Wat: who knows what these wild Irishes may have done to him?"

#### GEORGE III. AND HIS WINE MERCHANT.

Mr. Carbonell, the wine merchant, was a favourite with George III. and used to be admitted to the royal hupts. Returning one day from the chase, his majesty affably entered into conversation with his wine merchant, and rode a considerable way *tête-à-tête* with him. Lord Walsingham was in attendance, and watching an opportunity, took Mr. Carbonell aside, and whispered him. "What's that? what's that" said the king,

“Walsingham has been saying to you?” “Please you, sire, I find I have been guilty of unintentional disrespect; my lord has just informed me that I ought to have *taken off* my hat whenever I addressed your majesty; but your majesty will please to observe, that whenever I hunt, my hat is fastened to my wig, and my wig is tied to my head, and I am riding a very high-spirited horse; so that if any thing goes off, we must all *go off* together.” The king laughed heartily at this whimsical apology, which he good-naturedly accepted, and continued to chat with his wine merchant, without endangering his falling from his horse.

#### SIR RICHARD STEELE.

When Steele was at Edinburgh, he took it in his head on a particular occasion, to make a splendid feast, and while the servants were wondering what great personages he meant to invite, he sent them into the streets to collect all the beggars and poor people that they might chance to find, and invite them immediately to his house. A tolerably large party was soon collected, and they were closely plied with whiskey, punch, and wine; so that forgetting all their cares, and free from all restraint, they gave loose to every peculiarity of their respective characters. When the entertainment was over, Sir Richard declared, that, independent of the pleasure of filling so many hungry stomachs, he had learned from them humour enough to form a very good comedy.

#### CONTRASTS.

The “*Comforts of Human Life*,” by R. Heron, were written in a prison, under circumstances of the greatest penury and distress—amidst privation and difficulty. The “*Miseries of Human Life*,” by Beresford, were, on the contrary, composed in a drawing-room, where the author was surrounded by the good things of this world, in the very lap of affluence and prosperity, amidst scenes of cheerfulness and good fellowship. A striking contrast will often be found to exist between authors and their works; melancholy writers are sometimes the most jocular and lively in society, and humorists in theory, frequently the most lugubrious of all animals in practice. Burton the author of the “*Anatomy of Melancholy*,” was of extremely facetious manners, and excelled in sprightly conversation; the most dolorous poet of our own day, Lord Byron, is one of the most brilliant and humorous of associates, when he condescends to mingle with the world.

The young Marquis L—— recently won 20,000 florins in the house of a nobleman at Florence, where a Faro-bank was clandestinely kept, and went away with it after midnight. Observing that he was followed by two men in disguise, he hastily took refuge in a guard-house and related his adventure, begging



at the same time that a soldier might accompany him home. The Corporal immediately consented, but first went out under the pretext of looking for the pursuers, but in reality to concert with the three soldiers the plunder of the stranger. They stopped his mouth, took the money from him, and then threw him into the river. While these villains were dividing their prize, three persons masked suddenly entered, declared that they knew every thing, and that, if the money was not shared with them, they would instantly give information to the Police. The soldiers were obliged to comply; and a new division was making when a Patrol entered the room. The officer took the whole company to the principal guard-house, where they found young L——, dripping wet: he being an expert swimmer, had saved himself, and given information of the circumstance. The 20,000 florins were recovered from the robbers, who were led to prison, where they expect their punishment.

#### TURKISH POLITENESS.

The following are some of the nicknames bestowed by the Turks upon other nations:—The Arabians they call Mad men; the Armenians, Dirt-eaters; the Bosnians, Vagabonds; the Bulgarians, the Banditti; Christians, in general, Idolaters; the Germans, Brutal Swearers; the English, Cloth-Sellers; Italians and all Franks, Camelions of a thousand colours; the French, Subtle; the Georgians, Lice-eaters; the Greeks, Hares; the Dutch, Spice dealers, and also Cheese Merchants; the Indians, Beggars; the Jews, Dogs; the Mainottes, Hot-headed Fellows; the Moldavians, Stupid Farmers, and Rams without horns; the Persians, Red-headed Heretics; the Poles, Boasting Infidels; the Ragusans, Spies; the Russians, the Villanous Russians; the Spaniards, Idlers; the Tartars, Carrion-eaters; the Venetians, Fishermen; the Walachians, Fiddlers. Of the Bohemians and Curds they say, a Bohemian fiddles and a Curd dances.

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### Poetry.

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#### THE TOAD AND THE FLY.

FROM ÆSOP IN RHYME.

When Cadmus lived, in days of yore,  
Three thousand years ago or more:—  
Retired within a shady grot,  
There lived a toad—deny it not,  
Who, thoughtful, sleepy, or sedate,  
Pass'd years away in lonely state.

At last he slept, as it should seem,  
Beside a petrifying stream,  
Which ere he woke to find it out,  
With stone enclosed him, round about;

*The Toad and the Fly.*

So tightly fitted to his shape,  
 He could not stretch, nor even gape.  
 —O! had he known, ere his repose,  
 How many years he had to doze,  
 No doubt he would have settled all  
 His worldly matters, great and small;  
 Nor left his children fighting battles  
 About his sundry goods and chattels;  
 Who knew not (pardon this digression)  
 Whether they ought to take possession.

Three thousand years had he to pass,  
*Imbedded in the solid mass:*

(I hope this message of stone,  
 Was *rent-free* all this time, I own.)  
 However, not a year ago,  
 It seems this block was sawn in two;  
 When, to the workmen's great surprise,  
 The drowsy reptile met their eyes,  
 Who issued, from his durance freed,  
 A venerable toad indeed.  
 Then crowds drew near from far to see  
 This remnant of antiquity,  
 Who, fully conscious of the fact,  
 Their utmost homage did exact.

It happen'd then, there came that way,  
 A fly that only lives a day;  
 Who thinking it was rather odd,  
 Such rev'rence should be paid a toad,  
 First ask'd the reason of the fuss,  
 And then address'd the reptile thus:

"And so," said he, "I find it's true,  
 This *world's* but twice as old as you;  
 A poor ephemeron am I,  
 This day was born, this day must die;  
 Yet I maintain, say what you will,  
 My life has been the longest still."

"What!" said the toad, with angry hiss,  
 "D'ye mean by such a speech as this?"

"Sir," said the fly with ready breath,  
 "Sleep is another kind of death;  
 Your days, though more than I can number,  
 You've spent in one continued slumber;  
 My life, though short it is, I own,  
 Has never once a slumber known:—  
 I do not reckon in the term  
 While I remain'd a torpid worm;  
 Nor you the time you must have dozed  
 Ere stone around you could have closed;  
 Nor when one's *half asleep* you see,  
 Which you *at present* seem to be;  
 But when one's broad awake you know,  
 And doing what one has to do,  
 As has this very day been done  
 By me, a poor ephemeron;  
 Which *single day*, it hence appears,  
 Exceeds your long *three thousand years*."

I'd further add, the sense to fix,  
 Lie not till *nine*, but rise at *six*;  
 The longer you can keep awake,  
 The longer you your life will make.



